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feel that though we may not know who " Mr. ——— " is, we ought not to be cheated out of the satisfaction of knowing that the person Miss Sinclair saw was really he. But in general the absence of anything like literary puttying or veneering serves merely to enhance the distinguishing quality of Miss Sinclair's narrative—its psychological accuracy. To attempt any summary of the author's impressions would be to represent them unfairly. It is enough to say that Miss Sinclair records perceptions of extraordinary keenness; that her point of view is normal without being in the least commonplace; that, seeking no false " unity of tone," she describes unmistakably true reactions, not only making us feel " the pity of it," but compelling us to realize that if we were actual witnesses of Belgium's distress we should sometimes be unable to feel the expected emotion at all.

SOCIALIZED GERMANY. By Frederic C. Howe, LL.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.

The most recent of Frederic C. Howe's treatises upon various practical aspects of political science, *Socialized Germany*, is one of those books which have been belated by the war. It was originally intended as a peace book and not at all as a war book. In a sense, however, the publication of this work at the present moment is timely. It is true enough that State socialism " has largely made Germany what she is, a menace and a model to other nations, a problem to statesmen of other countries "—a demonstrator of efficiency, if not " a pathfinder in social reform." Some knowledge of German institutions, certainly, is desirable; disapproval of German world policy should lead no one to the hasty conclusion that the German scheme of things is wrong from the ground up.

It is equally true that social and economic problems in America are pressing hard for solution. Our public domain is exhausted—or withheld from use. The West is no longer a land of golden opportunity. Monopolies in industry threaten to grow beyond the Government's power to control them. Unemployment is more or less chronic. In the cities there appears to be a lack of skilled administrators and an absence of social vision. In view of all this, Germany, a nation which has solved in her own way many of the problems which confront us, is surely worth studying.

No one doubts that America will successfully cope with those problems to the solution of which the traditional *laissez-faire* philosophy may prove inadequate. There are indeed many indications of growing liberality and enlightenment in American life. Just at present we are beginning to see in the colleges young men and women more or less imbued with new ideas and ideals. We are beginning to see in affairs a somewhat broader and more tolerant spirit. The admired type of successful business man is no longer the mere accu-

mulator of wealth—no longer a man of the class which a recent writer somewhat ferociously describes as “prehensile conservatives” who have “made good in the distribution of pecuniary flotsam.” If it prove true that the best remedy for unsatisfactory conditions lies in heavily taxing the incomes of the rich in order to obtain funds for carrying out expensive social legislation, doubtless American men of wealth will learn to bear their share of the general burden as cheerfully as do the burghers of German cities. But America must solve her problems in her own way—that is, democratically. Just how she is to do this is the really important question—and it is a question which Dr. Howe in the treatise under consideration does not discuss. “This book,” writes the author, “is not a plea for socialism. . . . I believe in democracy.” Nevertheless, the tendency, if not the conscious aim, of his book is to awaken admiration for the smooth and effective working of the German system of social laws. How far the success of the German methods are dependent upon that absolutism, the danger of which he fully recognizes, and how far, aside from this, the German methods are applicable to American conditions, Dr. Howe does not attempt to show.

In short, the book *Socialized Germany* is simply an excellent descriptive treatise, with an undertone of admiration for efficiency and of urgency toward stronger public spirit, wider vision. In this respect it resembles the author's specific discussions of city government. But it is decidedly less definite in its bearing upon American conditions, and hence much vaguer in its message, than, for example, Mr. Howe's *European Cities at Work*. For the basis of comparison upon which the work depends for its value and meaning is relatively broad and ill-understood.

LIFE AND LETTERS IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE. By Christopher Hare. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.

Just as the spirit of the Italian Renaissance seems to have been intoxicating to the men who lived in it, so to modern men who write about it the period seems to be somewhat overstimulating. The theme acts as a challenge to the writer's rhetorical powers; it spurs him to ecstasies of appreciation and to spurts of romantic enthusiasm. A sort of licensed exaggeration prevails, as it does in only a little less degree in popular books about ancient Greece. For to be enthusiastic about the Athens of Pericles or the Florence of Lorenzo de' Medici is thought to be good for the soul. Thus the impression of life in the Italian Renaissance which the unlearned reader acquires is likely to be portentous and dazzling—romantic but hardly lifelike. For the writers show this life through a splendid mist.

Life and Letters in the Italian Renaissance, by Mrs. Marion Andrews (“Christopher Hare”), neither dispels the mist nor adds